

e-Bugle

Garrett Bugle Internet Edition

Volume 55

November 2008

No. 9



Calendar

Sat., Oct. 25	Pumpkin carving, basketball court, 1 pm; Haunted Porcupine Woods, 7–8:30 pm (see p 4)	Fri., Nov. 7	Deadline for submitting names for jobs list (see p 3)
Sun., Oct. 26	Garrett Park Fall Tree Walk, meet at Post Office, 1 pm (see p 6); art show reception, 3 to 5 pm, Penn Place (see p 3)	Mon., Nov. 10	Town Council meeting, Town Hall, 8 pm
Mon., Oct. 27	Last weekly pickup of yard waste	Tues., Nov. 11	Lunch Bunch, Town Hall, 12:30 pm; <i>Bugle</i> deadline, 4 pm
Thurs., Oct. 30	Casual Musicians Club Jam, Town Hall, 8 pm	Fri., Nov. 14	Film Society, <i>Rules of the Game</i> , Town Hall, 7 pm (see p 7)
Fri., Oct. 31	School Halloween Parade, 1:45-ish: street closings 1:15 (see pp 3, 6); Trick or Treat night	Sat., Nov. 15	Architectural walking tour; meet Penn Place, 11 am, 2 pm (see p 2)
Sun., Nov. 2	GIVES soup supper, Town Hall (see p 6)	Thurs., Nov. 20	Casual Musicians Club Jam, Town Hall, 9 pm
Mon., Nov. 3	Monthly yard-waste pickup	Sat., Nov. 22	GPNS Art & Craft Fair, Town Hall, 10 am–5 pm (see p 5); last weekly Farmers Market
Tues., Nov. 4	Citizens Assoc. Election Night Party, Town Hall, 8 pm (see p 4)	Sun., Nov. 23	GPNS Art & Craft Fair, Town Hall, 10 am–5 pm
Thurs., Nov. 6	Casual Musicians Club Jam, Town Hall, 8 pm	Wed., Nov. 26	Citizens Assoc. Meeting, Town Hall, 8 pm, topic TBD
		Thurs., Nov. 27	Happy Thanksgiving!

Unanimity on Council

After three months of contentious debate, the Town Council, at its October meeting, passed a change to Garrett Park's zoning ordinances.

Now, if you're tired of reading about this issue, please be assured that I'm tired of writing about it. So here's a short recap. Family requests building permit for front porch. It's denied. According

to the town, with the addition, structures on the lot would have exceeded what's allowed. Family doesn't file for a variance (in their view, applying for a variance was not appropriate as they consider they followed the law as written); instead, they file a lawsuit. During a hearing, judge raises altered state law, which changes how lot coverage should be calculated. Garrett Park says a

(continued next page)

Garrett Park Citizens Association
Garrett Park, Maryland 20896-0456

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(continued from previous page)

property's combined setbacks must create 82 percent open space. New state law suggests you should, instead, specify maximum lot coverage. In our town, that would be 18 percent. At special August council meeting, 18 percent ordinance is introduced. Some townspeople are outraged and controversy ensues. Council postpones scheduled September vote, to allow for more discussion. Council acts at October meeting.

So to cut to the vote, the 18 percent lot coverage statute passed unanimously. There were, however, two amendments of note, both of which were proposed by Jack Mandel, and both of which also passed unanimously.

When proposed in August, the new setback ordinance included a "laundry list" of items that were to be included in calculations of lot coverage, such as chimneys, decks, stoops, and similar items. These have traditionally been considered—but not mandated for consideration—in applications for building permits. The amendment removed that list from the new ordinance. In other words, what "extras" are calculated in lot coverage remain a judgment call.

Jack's second amendment added language specifying that if the new, altered ordinance were to be struck down by a referendum or a court, the town would simply revert to its previous zoning regulations. This move was seen by one side as an attempt to preempt a possible referendum. The other viewpoint is that the town needs to be sure it isn't left without any building regulations at all.

One final note on zoning—for this month, at least. Mayor Keller talked at length about a task force he and the Council are working to assemble, which will take a comprehensive look at zoning issues. The membership is not yet determined, but he said the panel will have wide latitude to establish its own ground rules and mandates, in order to review every aspect of Garrett Park zoning and suggest potential changes. Clearly, Chris said, public meetings will be key, and this will be your time to speak up. Should Garrett Park drop its unique zoning and simply conform to Montgomery County's rules? Is 25 percent lot coverage more appropriate for today's land use?

Is there a revolutionary idea that will make Garrett Park a national model? It's time for all of us to step up and get involved.

Richard Folkers

Architectural Walking Tour

Most of us know that Garrett Park owes its existence to the railroad. And that the town was incorporated during a fight over an indoor toilet. And that Chevy Houses got their name from the fact that a unique marketing gimmick let new owners pay for their house and their car on the same monthly bill. But did you know that the inventor of the punch card system that evolved into IBM lived here? Or the inventor of the predecessor to scuba gear? Or practitioners of the Bahai faith? Or the Turkish Consul? Did you know that Garrett Park was the setting for a popular 1920s novel? Or that our town plan was influenced by Frederick Law Olmstead? To learn more about these and other fascinating tidbits of Garrett Park history, as well as the difference between a Queen Anne cottage, a bungalow, and a colonial revival, join us for a walking tour on Saturday, November 15. Tours will be given at 11 am and at 2 pm.

With the help of a Montgomery County grant, the Garrett Park Historic Preservation Committee is developing a new walking tour brochure for Garrett Park. The tours on November 15 will introduce the walking tour route that is featured in the brochure. The tours will highlight the houses to be described in the brochure, but they will also provide lots of information that can't be crammed into a small leaflet. The tours will be lead by Historic Preservation Committee members Perry Chapman (professor of art history at the University of Delaware) and Andy Seferlis (sculptor, tour guide, and architectural historian).

It has been 10 years since Garrett Park had its last house tour, and many families have moved in since that time. So join your friends and neighbors for an opportunity to spend an hour immersed in Garrett Park history and architecture. Mark your calendars for November 15 at either 11 am or 2 pm. Meet in front of Penn Place. Rain date will be November 16.

The *Garrett Bugle* is a publication of the Citizens Association of Garrett Park, published 10 times a year. Publication of the *Bugle* is supported by member dues. All residents of Garrett Park are members of the Citizens Association. Yearly dues (\$20 per family or \$10 per individual per address) can be sent to Citizens Association, Box 456, Garrett Park, MD 20896.

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Town Administrator Notes

Halloween Parade: The Garrett Park Elementary School’s annual Halloween Parade steps off from the school at 1:30 pm on Friday, October 31. In order to protect the marchers, Kenilworth and Montrose from Strathmore to Oxford will be closed to vehicular traffic from a little after 1 pm until the parade is concluded, probably by 2:15 pm. Oxford between Kenilworth and Montrose will also be closed. Temporary “No Parking” zones will also be set up along the parade route. If you plan to watch the parade, please walk, if at all possible, so that congestion in the area can be kept to a minimum. Residents who live on the streets to be closed should plan accordingly.

Leaf Removal: Autumn is fast upon us, and soon the leaves will be falling thick and fast. As before, Bethke Landscaping will be removing leaves for the town, starting the week of October 13 and continuing until the end of the year. Each street will be cleared once every week, as early in the week as possible (rain will delay collections). Leaves should be placed in rows along the curb. Please remove sticks, trash, and other debris that could damage the machinery. Please do not shred the leaves or put out grass clippings. If you have any problems, call the Town Office (301-933-7488).

Trash Collection After Holidays: The following holidays are observed by our trash contractor: New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas. If a Monday is missed, recycling is collected on Tuesday, trash is collected on Thursday, and yard waste will be collected on the next Monday. Missed Thursday trash will be collected on the following Monday.

Yard Waste Removal: Remember, November through February yard waste will be collected the first Monday of each month only. That dependable harbinger of spring, weekly collection, will resume in March.

Children and Leaves: Please warn your children not to play in the leaves piled along the street for removal. There is considerable risk of being hit by a car, even on Garrett Park’s quiet streets. If you are driving near a pile of leaves, treat it as you would a ball rolling into the street. Assume a child is nearby and likely to run into the street.

Security At Home: Most of you are aware of the recent spate of robberies and home invasions in our area—a number of the robberies have actually been in Garrett Park. I want to reiterate that you should always keep your doors locked. Garrett Park is happily a very safe place, but we are part of a larger urban environment, and hundreds of strangers pass through our town each day.

Ted Pratt
Town Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer

Visit Garrett Park’s Web site:
www.garrettpark-md.gov/

Art at Penn Place

The work of nine artists will be shown at Penn Place over the next year. Included in this year’s show is the work of four Garrett Park artists: Martha Seigel, Glenn Roberts, Vickie Baily, and Sean Ruttkay. A preview of the series will be held from Sunday, October 26, to November 8. During the preview, each artist will be represented by one painting or photograph. A reception will be held on October 26 from 3 to 5 pm at Penn Place to honor the participating artists. Light refreshments will be served.

- Art exhibitions for the year are as follows:
Preview—October 26
Martha Seigel—November 9
Judy Prevo—December 14
Murray Gould—January 18
Glenn Roberts—February 22
Estelle Korman—March 29
Vickie Baily—May 3
Rhoda Ostrow—June 7
Sean Ruttkay—July 12
Silvia Dinale—August 16 to September 20

We expect that this year will again feature unique artistic styles and diverse media.

Bert Zbar

Jobs List

If you are 13 or older and want to make some money doing jobs around town (such as shoveling snow or baby sitting), you can sign up to be added to the jobs list to be published in a future Bugle. Contact Mary Moyer by Friday, November 7.

Green Again

Thank you, Walt Damtoft, for your donation to our green banner fund. His wife Janet was the editor of this publication for many years, and this is in memory of her.

Have you paid your dues yet? The Porcupine Woods haunting is right around the corner! Mail your family’s dues to Box 456 as soon as possible.

Mary Moyer



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Citizens Association News

The Citizens Association held a meeting on September 24 to discuss the recent crime in Garrett Park as well as to continue the discussion on drafting a new setback ordinance. Several members of the Montgomery County Police Department attended including Community Policing Officer Denise Gill, Assistant Chief Wayne Jerman, and Commander Russell Hamill. Officer Gill updated us on several of the recent cases in the neighborhood and assured us that all leads are being followed up. They mentioned that the majority of the crimes that have been perpetrated in Garrett Park have been crimes of opportunity. They offered the following pointers:

- Harden your home against break-ins. Lock your doors, windows, and cars. Keep any shrubs in front of your home trimmed and clear of your windows.
- Don't open your door unless you know who is there. Use your peep hole, if you have one.
- Make sure your house number is clearly visible so the police can find your house if they need to.
- Try to vary your daily routine. If you leave and come home at the same time every day, leave or come back from a different direction and at a different time.
- Conduct a "mini neighborhood watch" when you return to the neighborhood. Look around your block to make sure things seem normal.
- Be aware of elderly neighbors. Offer to help them make sure their homes are secure.

The Montgomery County Police offer a free home check. They will assess your home's security and give you pointers on how to improve it. The Montgomery Police Web site has more: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/police

Following the discussion with the police, we opened the forum to a discussion about instituting a new setback ordinance. Several members of the committee that was in place when the current overlay was instituted said that their aim in setting it up was to preserve the open space in Garrett Park in a way that addressed all lot sizes and shapes. It is believed that the overlay is still the most stringent in Montgomery County. Several members of the community gave comments that included the following:

We should strictly follow Montgomery County's laws and not try to institute our own restrictions on top of the county's.

We should look at side by side graphic comparisons of what is being done in Garrett Park and what is being done in other parts of the county (Chevy Chase, for instance) before we institute anything.

The way the current ordinance reads gives an incentive to put large separate garages on properties. This does not promote open space.

Garrett Park should be more restrictive than the rest of the county where people have essentially turned garages into second homes.

Part of what Garrett Park is all about is open decks and porches. Why should these things count toward the overall bulk of a house?

The current zoning is punitive to those with smaller lots. Perhaps there should be rules that allow for those with smaller or odd-sized lots to have special variances.

We need simple rules so that someone contemplating the purchase of a new home or contemplating a construction project on their home does not have to hire a consultant to interpret the code.

Upcoming Events:

Pumpkin Carving and Spooky Woods—note date change! At 1 pm on Saturday, October 25, on the basketball court, GPCA will hold the annual pumpkin carving contest. Winners will be announced that evening before Spooky Woods. Snacks and refreshments will be provided. We request that you please bring your own pumpkin and carving utensils (knives, stencils, etc.).

Join us again at 6:30 pm on the basketball court for some refreshments and to hear the results of the morning's pumpkin carving contest. At 7 pm, the GPCA's annual Spooky Woods will kick off in Porcupine Woods. Kids of all ages are invited to join us to share scares and laughs at this Garrett Park tradition. Little ones can walk through a less scary version ahead of the older kids. Volunteer ghouls are needed. To help, please contact Matt Stavish by telephone or by e-mail.

Election Night Party. Come join your neighbors on November 4 at 8 pm in a nonpartisan setting—the Town Hall—to watch the returns on this historic night for our nation. Light refreshments and heavy politics will be served.

Garrett Park Listserv:

Tap into our neighborhood's resources and stay informed with the Garrett Park neighborhood listserv. This is an electronic forum to communicate information about town concerns, safety issues, upcoming events, and recommended services (for example, contractors, lawn care, doctors, and baby sitters.) The listserv will not be used for unsolicited marketing, and you can unsubscribe at any time. To join, e-mail Todd Harris or sign in at groups.yahoo.com/group/GarrettParkneighbors.

Comments for the Citizens Association?

If you have questions or comments for the Citizens Association, please send a note to P.O. Box 456, or e-mail either Matt Stavish or Chris Strong.

Newcomers Reception

The Garrett Park Newcomers reception was hosted by the Citizens Association on Sunday, September 28. Seven of the eight new families in town attended to meet their neighbors and hear from Mayor Keller and representatives of the Women's Club, Historic Preservation Committee, Arboretum Committee, Town Office, and others. The Citizens Association offers a special thank you to Pam and Dick Morgan for their efforts on making this a great event.

Bill Rivers and Karen Jegalian have moved into 11201 Rokeby Avenue with their 5-year-old son. Coming from Burkittsville and College Park, they've had their eyes out for a home here for some time.

Jim and Lynn Sears are now in 10903 Clermont Avenue. They come all the way from Silver Spring.

Beth Anderson came from Frederick along with husband Eric, who works for GAO. They have grown children, Chris and Katie. They live at 4804 Strathmore Avenue.

Carla Naranjo and Brendan Goeckel will be in 11306 Rokeby when it is finished. Living in Kensington, they have been looking for the last

three years for a home here. She teaches Spanish at Montgomery College, and he is a documentary TV producer.

Sigrid and Mark Lame are now in 10918 Kenilworth Avenue along with their son, who is a first grader at GPES. They are both retired actuaries.

Glen and Kathy Ashley are located at 10711 Kenilworth, having moved here from Las Vegas. They work for the Department of Energy.

From Parkwood Natalie Shelton, Eric and Pearl moved into 10909 Clermont Avenue. She is a patent attorney. They are also joined by Berkley, their dog.

And coming soon to our neighborhood, Karin and Don Gibbins will be moving into 10707 Kenilworth Avenue when renovations are complete. He is a designer and builder, and will be working on the property next door as well.

If we have missed anyone or gotten our facts mixed up, we apologize. Let me know and you will have a correction in the next issue. Welcome to the neighborhood of Garrett Park.

Mary Moyer

Bugle Notes . . . Sweet and Sour

- ♪ The Post Office staff thanks all of you who brought back the yellow "package" cards. It replenished their supply somewhat. If there are any more hiding in your house, please return them ASAP. Since the holiday package season is coming up, they'll be sure to need them. Also, you can still get the "Forever" stamps and hold on to them for some time before using them. You will still be able to use them when the postage rates go up to \$1 in the far future. Just remember where you put them!
- ♪ Did you know that Sen. Joe Biden is familiar with Garrett Park? Zoe Morris rented her parents' home (now the Naus' on Kenilworth) to the Senator's brother many years ago, and Sen. Biden was seen on several different occasions in the back yard.
- ♪ Leo Bradford won over 300 ribbons this year for his horticultural exhibits. He won Best in Show at the Talbot, Prince William, Prince George's, and Anne Arundel County fairs. He won Grand Champion at Washington and Kent County Fairs. Not to leave any county out, he got four Champion Ribbons at the Calvert County fair, and one at Howard County fair. At the Charles County Fair he won the Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland Award

of Merit, and at the Maryland State Fair he walked away with the President's Award for the Best Horticultural Exhibit. Montgomery County saw him win second to the Grand Champion. It only goes to show that hard work does pay off. Congratulations, Leo. There are not many counties left to enter in, but good luck next year!

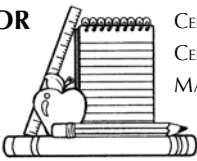
- ♪ We received a plea from a long-suffering resident to remind dog owners of their duty to clean up after their dogs wherever they relieve themselves, such as at road edges and in wild-seeming areas. She has had some unwelcome surprises while walking. So don't forget those plastic bags.

Craft Fair Coming

The Garrett Park Nursery School Craft Fair will take place on November 22 and 23 from 10 am to 5 pm, again at the Town Hall. There will be a wide variety of beautiful and unique items from local artisans and craftsmen, as well as delectable homemade baked goods. Admission is free and all proceeds benefit the GP Co-op Nursery. For information, contact Angelee Marques.

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Tree Walk

Please join the Arboretum Committee for the annual Garrett Park Fall Tree Walk on Sunday, October 26, at 1 pm. The walk will leave from the Post Office. We are once again very fortunate to have the highly knowledgeable Phil Normandy, plant collections manager at Brookside Gardens, lead what is sure to be an enjoyable and educational walk to gaze at the many stunning trees in Garrett Park. It is also a great opportunity to learn about the Arboretum in the company of your neighbors and bask in the wonder of the majestic trees that are part of our town.

The walk will include visiting some of the “Champion Trees” in Garrett Park. The Champion Trees effort is part of an initiative led by Ken Ingham, GP Conservation Trust, to engage the Garrett Park community in celebrating the trees that surround them. A “Champion Tree” is a noteworthy large tree specimen. We are encouraging you to nominate a tree in your block of Garrett Park for consideration to be a Champion Tree. Trees can be on public or private property. Entries can be submitted to Ken Ingham by phone or by e-mail, and we will ask Phil to point these trees out during our walk. As a start we will be looking for entries for two species: American sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*) and the tulip tree, yellow poplar, or tulip poplar (*Liriodendron*

tulipifera). American sycamore can attain the largest trunk diameter of any of the eastern U.S. hardwoods. The tulip tree is the tallest hardwood tree in North America. Let us know if you have a noteworthy specimen near you! It may be a real challenge to decide which of the many tulip trees in town is the tallest ... and biggest! For more information about these species, you can visit forestry.about.com or almost any tree/gardening book. We plan to set up a Facebook page for “Champion Trees of Garrett Park” so we can post pictures and discuss the spectacular trees in town. We hope over the next couple of years to introduce different species for consideration as Champion Trees. Please let Ken Ingham or the Arboretum Committee know if you have a particular tree of any species that you think is noteworthy!

We look forward to seeing everyone for what is sure to be a beautiful afternoon and wonderful walk among our trees on Sunday, October 26, at 1 pm. This is a great way to further enjoy another beautiful and colorful fall in Garrett Park.

GPES

The homework club is still looking for adult community volunteers to work one on one with students who need help with their studies. If interested (the commitment is for one hour on Tuesday afternoons), call the school to volunteer (301-929-2170).

For the safety and security of the school, please be sure to sign in at the main office and receive a sticker to wear. Anyone who enters the building must be accounted for in case of a fire drill or emergency.

Two more meetings remain for citizen input to the design process for the modernization (that is, the tearing down and rebuilding) of the school. The dates are Thursday, November 13, at 3:30 pm and Tuesday, December 2, at 7 pm. All meetings will be held at the school.

Halloween Parade

Be prepared to watch hundreds of school children march along Oxford Street in the annual Halloween parade—weather permitting—on October 31. For GPES the students will start out around 1:45 pm and wend their way along the street. Afterwards they will go to the back field and parade for each other. Note that for safety, streets near the parade route (Kenilworth and Montrose Avenues and Oxford Street) will be closed to car traffic from about 1:15 to 2:15 pm. Parking will not be allowed on Oxford Street to Shelley Court all day.

The school is again sponsoring a UNICEF drive for trick or treating youngsters, so have those coins ready.

GIVES Soup Supper

Mark your calendars for Sunday, November 2, for the GIVES Soup Supper, to be held at Town Hall from 5 to 7 pm. This event is a wonderful opportunity for residents new and old to meet and mix for a good cause. There is no charge but donations to GIVES will be much appreciated. Each month at the Post Office, GIVES collects money that is given to help support the American Friends Service Committee and the Dinner Program for Homeless Women in Washington, D.C.

We are looking for people who make homemade soup and bread, and at the suggestion of our Garrett Park Climate Action Now committee, we suggest you try to purchase locally grown ingredients. This year we will bring all of the pottery soup bowls, and we request that everyone bring their own utensils. Nonalcoholic beverages will be provided, but you may also bring your own wine. This is a family event, so children are welcome. Erika Barry, Executive Director of DPHW (Dinner Program for Homeless Women) will attend to talk about the program and how your dollars help.

Anyone wishing to make soup or bread please call Glenda Ingham or e-mail Karen Anderson. Volunteers to help with setup and takedown are needed as well. Watch the P.O. for flyers and reminders. Hope you can make it! *Please note:* There will be no GIVES collection on Saturday, November 1. We will resume on December 6.

Mary Moyer

Final GPFS Film of 2008

A French country estate, illicit liaisons, upstairs/downstairs intrigue, even murder—these are the ingredients of a classic film that has inspired and entertained audiences and movie-makers for decades. A devastating satire, *Rules of the Game* (French 1939) is considered by critics one of the best and most influential films ever made. It was director Jean Renoir's masterpiece. (Yes, Jean is Claude's son.) It is a must-see for cinephiles or anyone who just wants to see a good old movie.

On November 14, join your friends and neighbors at the Town Hall for the Garrett Park Film Society's last film of 2008 and see what all the talk is about. "... a comedy, a tragedy, a portrait of class manners, a love story of touching caprice ... and far and away the cinema's greatest midsummer night's dream." —Owen Gleiberman, *Entertainment Weekly*. "So simple and so labyrinthine, so guileless and so angry, so innocent and so dangerous, that you can't simply watch it, you have to absorb it." —Roger Ebert, *Chicago Sun-Times*. "The mobile camera seems to be a member of the party, as it follows the almost balletically choreographed movements of the cast. The effect for the audience is transcendental. We are watching life at its messiest, unfolding at its most beautiful." —Desson Howe, *Washington Post*.

As usual, a dinner will be served around 7:15 pm, this time featuring French cuisine. While the menu is not yet set, prices for a main course (meat and meatless options) are normally under \$10; soda, water, wine, and beer are on offer; and popcorn and nuts will be available. The film starts at 8 pm. Admission for GPFS members is free; non-members pay \$5 per person or \$10 per family.

Join the Film Society

Membership entitles you to free admission to the 2009 series of films (see related article) plus advance notice of films. Consider this: a GPFS membership would make a great gift this holiday for the person with everything.

Membership categories are as follows:

- Gaffer (Single): \$25—Entitles you to 5 coupons for water, soda, or popcorn
- Gaffer (Family): \$40—10 coupons
- Screenwriter: \$100—20 coupons
- Film Sponsor: \$200 to sponsor one of the 2009 films; includes acknowledgement of your support plus 20 coupons
- Director: \$250—20 coupons and the GPFS's undying appreciation
- Producer: \$500—20 coupons, undying appreciation, *and* reserved seats

Make your check payable to GPFS and mail to Suzanne Grefsheim, Treasurer, PO Box 175, Garrett Park, MD 20896. Include your address, or if it is a gift, include the name and address of the recipient (so we can send a reminder before each film). A 2009 membership card and coupons will be sent before the first showing in January.

GPFS 2009 Film Series

January. *The Hustler* (USA 1961)—Paul Newman in one of his greatest roles plays small-time pool hustler Fast Eddie Felsen, who challenges Minnesota Fats (Jackie Gleason) to a high-stakes match, only to lose everything including his confidence. At rock bottom, he hooks up with a ruthless manager (George C. Scott) who agrees to teach him the ropes. He soon realizes that making it to the top may cost him his soul.

February. *Sweet Land* (USA 2005)—The poignant love story of Inge and Olaf is also a visually stunning celebration of the immigrant experience. Inge, a mail order bride, arrives in rural Minnesota in 1920 only to find that her German heritage raises the suspicions of everyone in the Norwegian community. Neither the Lutheran pastor nor a judge will marry them. The film reveals how they overcome these obstacles.

March. *Croupier* (Britain 1998)—A struggling writer (Clive Owen in his breakthrough role) takes a job as a croupier to make ends meet. He soon realizes that his experiences would make a good book, especially when a woman to whom he is attracted asks him to be the inside man for a heist. A neo-noir film suitable for older teens.

April. *My Man Godfrey* (USA 1936)—In this screwball comedy starring William Powell and Carole Lombard, two socialite sisters on a scavenger hunt come upon "a forgotten man" in the city dump. After he expresses his contempt for the idle rich, one of the sisters asks him to be the family butler. He accepts, and of course they fall in love. How much fun is that!

June. *Tonari no Totoru* (Japan 1988)—In a delightful example of anime suitable for all ages, two young girls move to the country with their father to be nearer their hospitalized mother. There they meet assorted forest sprites and other friendly creatures.

July. *The Band's Visit* (Israel 2007)—An Egyptian ceremonial police band is booked by an Arab cultural center in a large Israeli city, but through miscommunication winds up in a small town in the middle of the Negev. With no transportation out until the next day and no place to stay, they are taken in by the local Israelis. A warm, gentle, and deeply affecting comedy.

September. *Never Cry Wolf* (USA 1983)—Based on Farley Mowat's book on his experiences in the Canadian wilds, where he was sent to collect evidence of the effect of wolves on the decline of the caribou population. Living among the wolves in a harsh environment, Mowat begins to think humans form a greater threat to the natural world than wolves do.

October. *Wordplay* (USA 2006)—A documentary about the *New York Times* crossword puzzle—the people who create them and the people obsessed by them. Features interviews with *NYT* puzzle editor Will Shortz and celebrity fans including Bill Clinton and Jon Stewart.

Preservation and Civility

Over the years Garrett Park has fought many battles to preserve its integrity as a unique incorporated town. There were repeated attempts to build roads through town from Randolph Hills, both by the MARC station and through the town tennis court. There were requests to open our streets to the Parkside apartments. There was the battle to prevent Porcupine Woods from being developed into town houses. The town prevailed in all of these battles, thanks to the dedicated efforts of its residents and leaders. Yet today we face probably the greatest threat to the integrity of the town and, ironically, the threat is from within. The lawsuit that has ostensibly been filed to obtain a front porch actually threatens the very core of the town's self-governance by attempting to invalidate any authority that the town has over its own zoning. That is why the Town Council has enacted an ordinance—which parallels the town's 1992 open space ordinance—in a format that is less likely to lead to future legal challenge.

In addition to threatening the municipality, there have been ugly rumors floated about the integrity of our citizens who have dedicated their time and effort to preserving this town. Our Mayor and Council have had their hands tied by the same lawsuit and are currently unable to respond to any discussion regarding this lawsuit. However, I am not so constrained, and as a long-time resident let me assure you that over the years many mayors and many councilmembers have struggled with the balancing act of keeping the character of the town while accommodating the wishes and desires of its citizens. Numerous different avenues were sought in attempting to preserve Garrett Park as a unique and desirable community. These include Historic Preservation, the Overlay Zone, and the Garrett Park Conservation Trust. Before there was even a coordinated attempt to preserve the town, individuals were trying to save open space. Two former mayors (Stanley Woodwell and Paul Edlund) deliberately built their homes across their extra lots so they could not be developed. Other residents donated their property to the town in an attempt to save open space, and still others sought to protect their extra lots from development by extracting assurances from the purchasers that they would take care to preserve the space. None of these solutions were, or are, perfect, and none have the same legal weight as the zoning authority officially granted to the town by the state over two years ago. Perfect or not, they were sincere attempts by citizens, who care a great deal, to protect this town. It is not only the duty, but also the respon-

sibility, of our town leaders to clarify and codify our past efforts and to represent the best interest of the town as a whole. It is our duty as citizens to keep discourse civil, to avoid propagating ugly rumors, and to be thankful and appreciative of all the residents, both past and present, who have helped make Garrett Park the kind of town that we all care about so deeply.

Barbara Jackson

Setback versus Coverage

On October 13, the Town Council voted to adopt a change to the building code (Chap. 4), changing "setback" language to "lot area coverage." The town's information sheet (the only position paper on the ordinance) indicates that the ordinance is no change—the "ordinance has the same effect as the current standard."

To the contrary, the newly adopted ordinance is a tremendous change. The terms "setback" and "lot area" have different definitions and different methods of measurement. Some projections of a building into the setback are permitted under a setback ordinance. For example, a covered, open front porch may extend 8 feet into the front setback. In contrast, the same covered, open front porch is calculated as part of the lot area percentage occupied by a building. One term is not interchangeable with the other, and the application of each term can bring dramatically different results.

In his October letter in the *Bugle*, Mayor Keller promised the town "a careful review of the current building (zoning) ordinance, with a view to possible changes undertaken through an open, participatory, thoughtful process." Unfortunately, the Council's adoption of the new legislation "put the cart before the horse." The legislative action taken by the Council came before a study was made to see what legislative changes we need with respect to the building code.

Cynthia Kratz

Porches and Open Space

The following is a response to a posting on the Garrett Park Web site by Ken Schwartz on October 11, 2008. Ken summarized and commented on the brief filed by the attorney for Elaine and John Martin. No brief or commentary from the Town's attorney was offered. I would like to share my comments with those of you who do not have access to the site.

Even a nonattorney should not be surprised by what Ken Schwartz reports—for "purely informational" purposes, of course. This is, after all, a lawsuit and the brief published reflects what could be expected in a case of this nature. Unfortunately, the release of the brief could be viewed as an attempt to further prejudice the Martins and their case in the eyes of town residents, and

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that would be most unfair, since Elaine and John Martin sought to avoid a lawsuit. The Martins made two formal settlement offers to the town before filing their suit. The town rejected both offers out of hand. The Martins were left with no option other than to seek relief through the Court.

This really is about the porch. The Martins simply want the porch they are entitled to build under the Town Code as properly read. Their goal is not, and never has been to overturn the Town Code, although that could be the result if the judge finds in their favor on the merits of the case. The town has yet another opportunity to avoid this potential consequence—as well as to avoid the increase of monetary and emotional cost to the residents of Garrett Park—by settling the very specific issue of the porch.

Rather than “agree to disagree” as is often done, and settle this case, the town appears to be moving toward a legislative fix by amending its law. This would leave the Martins no remedy other than to continue litigation. If the town adopts its pending legislation, the case changes—it becomes more complicated, and the changed circumstances provide additional legal issues upon which a judge may rule in the Martins’ favor. The “porch alone” should be the issue, as it always has been for Elaine and John. From the outset, the town has had the power to make this lawsuit go away, but has chosen the questionable and expensive course of action that has brought us to this point.

I think that we all agree that open space is rightly a much valued aspect of the town.

If the Town Code were overturned, it is not the end of life as we know it in Garrett Park.

The Montgomery County 2005 overlay ordinance for Garrett Park limits any lot to 20 percent total coverage for all structures—a reasonable protection for open space.

For the record, Ken errs in his assertion that the request for awarding attorney fees is a new request. It was part of the lawsuit served on the town and has remained unchanged.

Anne Martin (still not related to Elaine and John Martin)

Referendum

As the *Bugle* goes to press, it appears that the town may soon be voting in a referendum on the lot coverage zoning ordinance recently adopted by the Town Council. So much has been said about this ordinance that I think a little background and perspective may be helpful. This is my view of the situation.

In 1992 town residents were very concerned about preserving the character of Garrett Park, which they felt was being threatened by the construction of ever larger homes in town. A key ele-

ment of the perceived character was open space, but the town lacked zoning authority to legislate open space directly. Since the town could establish setbacks, the Historic Preservation Committee and the Town Council developed an innovative approach to regulate the amount of a lot that a house could cover: the combined minimum setback. Instead of requiring that a house only cover 18 percent of a lot, the Council adopted a provision in a setback ordinance which stated that the combined setback from all lot borders must be at least 82 percent of the lot area. The ordinance was immediately petitioned to referendum, and the citizens affirmed the Council’s action.

Now, the question of whether the town, in using the combined setback to regulate lot coverage, might have exceeded its authority has been raised by the judge in the much-discussed current court case on the setback law. If this portion of the 1992 law were struck down, the town would not retain its own open space provision, stricter than the county’s, which the citizens have desired, and which has worked well since 1992.

In 2006, the state legislature granted the town authority to establish zoning. Therefore it can establish directly and without any legal question the same 18 percent lot coverage that has been in existence since the 1992 referendum. That is exactly what the Council did at its October meeting. It hasn’t changed any provisions. It has only adopted a zoning ordinance in place of a combined setback ordinance, in order to protect the open space that we have said is so important to the town’s character. Further, the Mayor and Town Council have already opened discussions on all of the town’s land use provisions, considering whether the 1992 provisions are now seen as needing adjustment. This discussion began at the September Citizens Association meeting. It is the stated intent of the town government for a full and frank exploration of this issue to occur, followed by appropriate action by the Council to implement the results of the public discourse.

In the interim, the zoning ordinance just passed protects the town’s open space, backing up but not changing the substance of the previous combined setback ordinance. I suggest that this is the proper way of proceeding and ask that, if there is a referendum on the ordinance, you vote to retain the ordinance as passed, and then enter into the discussions of whether the provisions should be changed.

Peter Benjamin

News versus Opinion

The lead article in the October 2008 *Bugle* “Continuing Controversy Over Setbacks” is featured as a news article. In fact, it is an editorial and belongs in the “Letters to the Editor” column. Mr. Folkers apparently has lost sight of his duty to report the news fairly and impartially—not to give his opinion regarding it.

Loretta Bonner

Letter from the Mayor

The Citizens Association's September meeting was particularly noteworthy; I want to thank Chris Strong and the CA officers for their contribution to thoughtful discussion of current town issues. Recognizing the concern of the community stemming from recent crime incidents, the meeting began with an informative presentation by representatives of the Montgomery County Police: Community Policing Officer Denise Gill, Assistant Chief Wayne Jerman, and Second District Commander Russ Hamill. The town works closely with the County Police to increase safety in Garrett Park, and we are continuing to explore other initiatives to enhance residents' security.

The Citizens Association meeting continued with a discussion of land use issues in Garrett Park, and I particularly want to express my appreciation to all for the affirmative tone of that discussion. That discussion was one step in a comprehensive look at our land use regulations, aimed at determining the future appearance and character of Garrett Park. Another significant step occurred on October 13 when the Town Council adopted a restatement of the town's open-space ordinance, first enacted and ratified by town residents in 1992. The Council adopted the law under recent state authority granted to municipalities so that towns can better reflect the local land use needs of their communities. For 16 years Garrett Park has established its own policy for preserving open space; adoption of the current ordinance protects the self-determined standards of the town and sets the stage for a comprehensive look at how the town wants to guide its destiny in the future.

In the September Citizens Association meeting and elsewhere, the need for careful study before taking actions that alter current standards has been emphasized. To that end, the Mayor and Council are establishing a Task Force to look broadly not only at the town's current land use laws but also at whether any additional approaches are warranted. In my view, that

endeavor should include examining not only restrictions or limits, but also laws or other initiatives that can provide *incentives* to achieve mutually desirable results in land use and building.

The Mayor and Council are establishing this Task Force to conduct both a study and a dialog that looks to the future. We hope that the Task Force will include a cross section of the community, but especially a representation of relatively recent arrivals in town. We envision a group that largely decides its own operating methods, as well as the scope and depth of its work (within some broad guidelines that the Task Force and Council will establish collaboratively). Essential elements include gathering data about the current status of Garrett Park land use in such areas as lot area coverage, accessory buildings, porches and decks, etc., for background and context. The group can also undertake research into other jurisdictions' approaches, written studies on land use issues, and the like. Meetings and other steps to encourage broad resident participation and expression of views will be an essential ingredient in the process. If you would like to participate in this effort, please indicate your interest to the Town Office (garrett-park@comcast.net); there are no requirements other than an interest and the ability to participate actively by attending meetings and contributing to a report to the Council.

As I noted last month, review of the current land use rules in Garrett Park will be an open, participatory, thoughtful process. In enjoying the inimitable character of Garrett Park, we all benefit from the efforts of those who have gone before us, and we owe it to future generations to be as careful as our predecessors to preserve the town's unique qualities. The Town Council and I invite all residents to contribute to discussion of the rules that influence the future look of Garrett Park.

Chris Keller

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